

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IGA-02 AID-05 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00
DHA-02 IO-13 /098 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6083

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1969

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT PINS ZA

SUBJ: KAUNDA - A TROUBLED LEADER

REF: (A) LUSAKA 1951; (B) LUSAKA 1952; (C) LUSAKA 1940;
(D) LUSAKA 1956

1. IN HIS ATTEMPT TO REASSURE HIS LISTENERS AT HIS JULY 8
PRESS CONFERENCE THAT ZAMBIA'S INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POLICIES
WERE IN GOOD HANDS, A DEFENSIVE TONE CREPT INTO KAUNDA'S
PRESENTATION IN A WAY THAT HE SURELY DID NOT INTEND. HE WAS
DEFENSIVE ABOUT EVEN HIS MAJOR TRIUMPH-THE "RECOGNITION"
BY THE OAU OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. RECOGNITION WAS ONLY FOR
THOSE DOING THE FIGHTING, WHO WERE LIBERATING ZIMBABWE AND DID
NOT IMPLY AN EFFORT TO DICTATE THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF
ZIMBABWE (AS SOME ZAMBIANS HAVE CHARGED). BESIDES, MUZOREWA
AND ESPECIALLY SITHOLE ARE BENEATH CONTEMPT BECAUSE THEY ARE
WILLING TO DEAL WITH SMITH(NO MENTION THAT NKOMO HAS BEEN WILLING TO

DO THE SAME IN THE PAST). FROM THE TENOR OF HIS REMARKS ONE
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ALMOST GOT THE FEELING THAT HE WAS FEARFUL AN INTERNAL SETTLE-
MENT MIGHT POSSIBLY SUCCEED. HIS ASSURANCES TO HIS ZAMBIAN
AUDIENCE THAT ZAMBIA HAD PROMISES OF OUTSIDE MILITARY SUPPORT
(SOURCE UNSPECIFIED) IN CASE OF ATTACKS FROM RHODESIA HAD A
HOLLOW RING. ZAMBIANS ARE FULLY AWARE THAT SMITH'S FORCES
COULD HIT ALMOST ANY AREA IN ZAMBIA AT WILL AND THAT PROMISES
OF ASSISTANCE LOOK GOOD ON PAPER BUT ARE NOT OF MUCH HELP

WHEN AN ATTACK IS UNDERWAY. IN ONE PASSAGE, HE ADMITTED THAT EVEN SOME MEMBERS OF HIS OWN PARTY WERE CALLING FOR THE OPENING OF THE RHODESIAN BORDER. THIS IS A REMARKABLE STATEMENT GIVEN THE VAST AMOUNT OF ATTENTION GIVEN IN THE MEDIA AND ON OCCASION BY KAUNDA HIMSELF TO CONDEMNING ALL THOSE WHO DO NOT SEE THE LIBERATION OF RHODESIA AS A MORAL CRUSADE. ZAMBIAN NEWSPAPERS HAVE FOR MONTHS CARRIED STORIES ABOUT "DARK CORNER MEETINGS" IN THE COPPERBELT BY OPPONENTS OF KAUNDA. HOWEVER, IN HIS REMARKS, KAUNDA CLASSIFIED SUCH STORIES AS THE PRODUCT OF THE WESTERN PRESS, AND THEN WENT ON TO CHARGE THAT SHORTAGES IN THE COPPERBELT WERE ARTIFICIAL--MANUFACTURED BY POLITICAL OPPONENTS. IN A STATEMENT THAT CARRIED A HINT OF BRAVADO, KAUNDA PROCLAIMED THAT HE WAS READY TO TAKE ON ANYONE IN A CONTEST FOR THE PRESIDENCY. HE THEN MADE THE POINT THAT ZAMBIA SHOULD KNOW THAT IT IS LUCKY SINCE KAUNDA NEVER HAS WANTED TO BE DICTATOR, BUT THEN HINTED THAT HIS CRITICS SHOULD NOT PUSH HIS BENEVOLENCE TOO FAR.

2. THE ONE CLEARLY POSITIVE NOTE IN HIS CONFERENCE WAS HIS REFUSAL TO REJECT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE OUT OF HAND. HE COULD HAVE DONE SO WHEN ASKED IF HE SUPPORTED NKOMO'S NEGATIVE REACTION TO THE INITIATIVE. INSTEAD HE CHOSE TO TEMPORIZE AND SAID HE HAD NOT HAD A CHANCE TO TALK WITH NKOMO.

3. LISTENING TO KAUNDA AND READING THE TRANSCRIPT OF HIS
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PRESS CONFERENCE, ONE IS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION OF A MAN WHO REALIZES THAT HE IS NOT CLEARLY IN CONTROL OF EVENTS WHICH COULD CONSPIRE TO OVERWHELM HIM.
CLINGERMAN

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NNN

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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